How foure marchauntes met whiche were of foure dyuerse lo[n]des all to Parys.

In the yere of our lorde happened that four out of dyuerse countrey as they were goyn[g] all togyder and [m]et togyder / for they were all foure goynge [to] Parys in Fraunce for company sake they rode [all] into one ynne / & it was about whytsontyde in the mooste ioyfull tyme of all the yere and theyr names were called as here foloweth. ỳ fyrst was called Courant of Spayne / ỳ second was called Borchart of Frāce / the thyrde was called Johan of Florēce / & the fourth was called Ambrose of Jennen. Than by the consent of the other marchaūtes Borchard of fraunce went vnto the hoste and sayd. Hoste now is the meryest tyme of the yere and we be foure marchauntes of foure dyuerse countreys & by fortune we met all togyder in one place & our iorney is to Parys. And therfore whyle we be so met lette vs make good chere togyder / & ordeyne ỳ best meet ỳ ye can get for money agaynst to morowe and byd also some of your beste frendes that you loue mooste that we maye make good chere togyder or that we departe fro hence / and we shall contente you all your money agayne. And than the hoste sayde that he wolde do it with a good wyll and than went he and bad many of his good frendes and neyghbours to dyner and he bought of ỳ best meet that he coude get for money and brought it home. And on the morowe he dressed it and made it redy agaynst dyner after the best maner ỳ he coude. And whan ỳ it was dyner

gestes to dyner & the marchaũtes
hem welcome. Than bad ỳ mar-
at he sholde bryng in the meete &
mygh go to dyner. And than the
myll. Than went the hoste and
meet & set it theron & pray-
estes to them & syt dow-
good chere al ỳ daye
longe with good hone
as very late with
daunsynge & lepynge. And w
ad done / the ge-
stes toke theyr leue of the marcha
& thanked them
for theyr good chere. And than euery man departed ho-
me to his house. And than cam the marchauntes to the
hoste & prayed hym hertely for to come in & thanked hym
that he had ordered & done all thynges so well and ma-
nerly.

How two of the marchauntes/as Johan and Ambrosius of Jennen hyld one another. v. thousand golde guldens.

When al ỹ marchaũtes & the gestes had made mery togyder al the daye longe / at nyght the gestes toke theyr leue of ỹ marchaũtes/ & thãked them for theyr good chere that they had made them/ & so departed euery one to theyr lodgynge. And whan that they were departed euery man to theyr house/thã wexed it late. And thã cam the hoste of ỹ house to the marchaũtes & asked them yf that they Wolde go slepe / & they answered vnto theyr hoste yes. And than toke he a candel and brought ỹ marchauntes into a fayre chambre / where was. iiij. beddes rychely hanged with costely curtaynes that euerye marchaunt myght lye by themselfe. And whan that they were all togyder in ỹ chamber/than began they to speke of many thynges / some good/some bad as it laye in theyr myndes. Than sayd Courant of spayne. Syrs we haue be all this daye mery and made good chere & euerye one of vs hath a fayre wyfe at home: howe fare they nowe at home we can not tel. Thã sayd bourcharde of Fraũce to the other marchauntes. What aske you how they do: They syt by the fyere and make good chere and eate / & drynke of the beste and laboure not atall/ & so get they vnto them hote blode & than they maye take an other lusty yonge man and do theyr pleasure with hym ỹ we know not of/for we be oftentymes long from them & for ỹ cause may ỹ lenne a loke for a nede secretly to an other. Than sayd Johan of Florence/we may all well be called fooles & nydeates that truste our wyfes in this maner as we do: for a Womãs hert is not made of so hard a stone but ỹ

wyll melte/for a womans nature is to be vnstedfaste and tourneth as the wynde dothe and careth not for vs tyll the tyme ỹ we come agayne. And we labour dayely bothe in wynde and rayne and put often our lyues in to parely and in auenture on the see for to fynd them wall & our wykes lyt at home and make good chere w̄ other good felowes & gyue them parte of the money that we get. And therfore an ye wyll do after my counsayle/ let euery one of vs take a fayre wenche to passe ỹ tyme wal as well as our wykes do/ & they shall knowe no more of that/ than we knowe of them. Than sayde Ambrosius of Jennē to them. By goddes grace that shall I neuer do whyle ỹ I lyue. For I haue at home a good & a vertuous woman and a womanlyc. And I know ... she is not of that dysposycyō/ but ỹ she wyl eschewe of all suche yll abusyons tyl the tyme that I com home agayn. For I knowe well that she wyl haue nonother man but me alone. And yf that I shold breke my wedlocke than were I but lytell worthe. Than sayd Johā of Florence. Felowe ye set moche prys by your wyfe at home and truste her with all that ye haue I wyll laye with you a wager of. v. thousande guldens yf ỹ ye wyl abyde me here I shal departe & ryde to Jennen & do w̄ your wyfe my wyll. Than sayd Ambrosius to Johan of Florence. I haue delyuered to my hoste. v. thousand guldens to kepe/ put ye downe as moche agaynste it & I shal tarye here tyll the tyme that ye retourne agayn from Jēnen/ & yf that you by ony maner of menes can get your pleasure of my wyfe ye shall haue all this money. Than sayd Johan of Florence. I am content/ and than putted he in his hostes hande other. v. thousande guldens agaynste Ambroses money. And than toke he